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19 February 1965

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE
RELATING TO NATIONAL SECURITY

State Dept. review completed

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*Vietnam: [REDACTED] The success of the military effort launched today to oust General Khanh is still in doubt, but the coup group appears to have substantial support in the Saigon area.

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The coup group involves many of the leaders of the abortive 13 September coup, who were subsequently cashiered, plus several middle-grade officers commanding combat units near the capital. The organizer and primary spokesman, however, appears to be Colonel Pham Ngoc Thao

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[REDACTED]

The coup forces, who control the Saigon Radio and have blocked Saigon's airport with tanks and troops, have announced that their move is intended to put an end to the governmental instability under Khanh. They state that General Tran Thien Khiem, now ambassador to the US, is being summoned back to replace Khanh as commander-in-chief, although Khiem is still publicly denying any knowledge of events in Saigon.

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The coup group has broadcast a proclamation, promising to return the armed forces to fighting the Communists and endorsing a purely civilian government. Although Khanh presently is the principal target, the rebels, if successful, may act later to remove the newly installed government of Phan Huy Quat.

Most of the coup leaders have ties with the southern Dai Viet Party--a rival faction of Quat's party--and many of them are Catholics. Their seizure of power is almost certain to provoke a serious reaction from the Buddhist leaders, and their prospects of uniting the military are questionable.

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Congo (Brazzaville): The assassination of high-level civil servants in Brazzaville this week appears to be part of a move by leftist extremists to consolidate their position within the regime.

The US Embassy is convinced that three officials, two of whose bodies have been recovered, were murdered on instruction by militants of the regime-sponsored youth movement. The leadership of this movement is closely associated with the most extreme elements in the ruling party. Two of the victims were prominent moderates who disapproved of the present government.

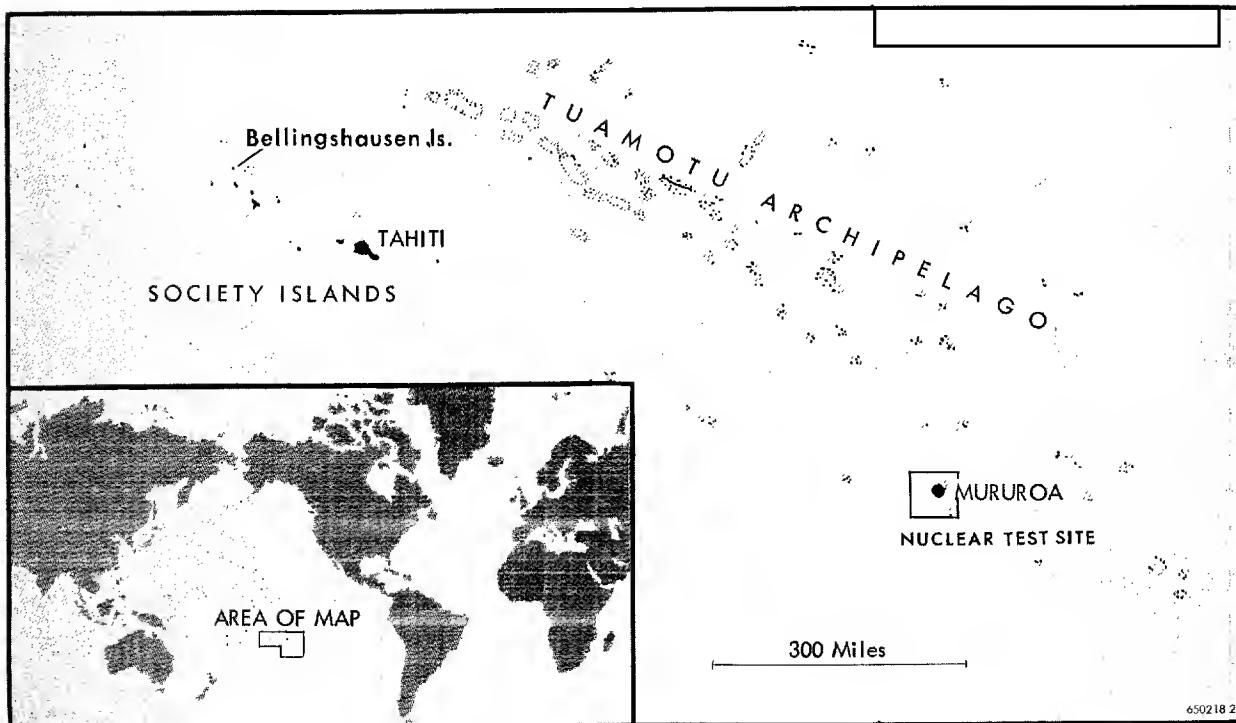
There is evidence, but so far no official acknowledgement, that at least 11 other persons, including two relatively moderate cabinet members, have recently been arrested.

These developments followed a radio speech by Prime Minister Lissouba on 12 February accusing various Western--mainly European--interests and their "African puppets" of plotting to overthrow his government from Leopoldville. In an aside, Lissouba advised his listeners not to be "astonished" by "events" they might see "in coming days." The timing and content of official news releases concerning these "events" have strengthened the US Embassy's impression that they have been carefully planned by the extremists.

In the past few weeks, the government has been confronted with serious dissatisfaction on the part of civil servants, who have complained about reduced family allowances. At the same time, opposition political groups have been increasingly active. Last week, the regime was further irritated by the positions--especially the strong support for Tshombé--which moderate French-speaking African leaders adopted at their conference in Mauritania despite the attendance of a Brazzaville representative.

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19 Feb 65 CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN Map

France: [President de Gaulle has instructed the Foreign Ministry to reject all US requests for facilities in French Polynesia.]

[Permission to use Bellingshausen Island to observe the 1965 solar eclipse has been revoked as has the previously granted exequatur for a US consul at Papeete. The recent requests for rescue and recovery facilities for the Apollo and Gemini projects, and for entry into the area of an oceanographic research vessel, were turned down flatly.]

[The refusal of facilities for scientific purposes is contrary to established free world practice. Only the Bellingshausen site is vital to the scientific research programs involved.]

[On the surface, this blanket refusal to permit Americans in the vicinity of France's nuclear test site seems so categoric as to rule out any possibility of compromise. De Gaulle, however, may have in mind using his refusal as leverage in France's attempt to get sophisticated US computers and other material for its nuclear weapons program.]

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NOTES

*Sudan: A new government clearly dominated by the Ansar political-religious brotherhood and the urban National Union Party is now being formed in Khartoum. The Communists are being assigned one portfolio in the new coalition, and all other major political groups will also be included. Although the non-Communists have been united in opposing the old government, their diverse interests and traditional rivalries may soon lead to renewed infighting among them.

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France - Latin America: De Gaulle has approved a stepped-up five-year economic aid program for Latin America involving loans totaling \$150 million. The Foreign Ministry is now working on plans to put the program in effect by 1 January 1966. In addition, the planned outlay for cultural and technical aid programs during the current year has been increased by about 40 percent to almost \$15 million, and will be raised by approximately the same ratio each year for the next five years.

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